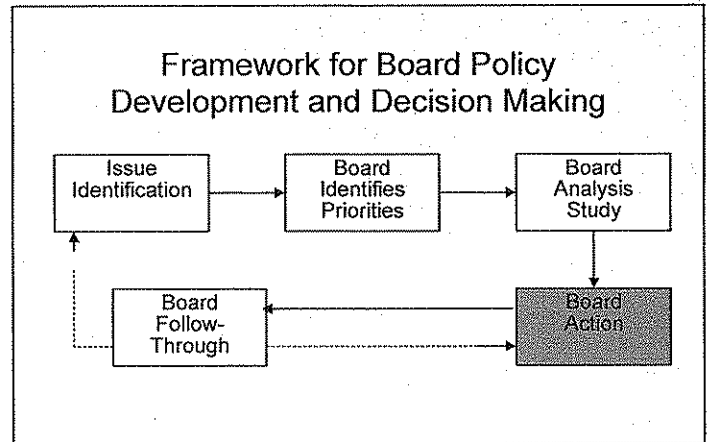


# Iowa State Board of Education

## Executive Summary

March 6, 2014



<b>Agenda Item:</b>	Western Iowa Tech Community College (WITCC) Interim Accreditation Report
<b>Iowa Goal:</b>	Individuals will pursue postsecondary education in order to drive economic success
<b>State Board Role/Authority:</b>	Iowa Code section 260C.47 (3) grants authority to the State Board of Education to determine whether the programs of a community college shall remain accredited.
<b>Presenters:</b>	Jeremy Varner, Administrator Division of Community Colleges  Kent Farver, Chief Bureau of Community Colleges
<b>Attachments:</b>	1
<b>Recommendation:</b>	The Department of Education recommends continued accreditation for WITCC. A state comprehensive accreditation evaluation will be conducted in 2018.
<b>Background:</b>	<p>This is a report of the evaluation of WITCC for continued state accreditation as an associate degree-granting institution. The Department conducted the on-site portion of the evaluation on October 8-9, 2013. The findings reflect the work of the accreditation team's interim review of WITCC.</p> <p>WITCC is following the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) model for accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission, a commission of the North Central Association (NCA). With AQIP, an institution demonstrates it meets accreditation standards and expectations through sequences of events that align with those ongoing activities that characterize organizations striving to improve their performance.</p>

***Final Accreditation Report  
Interim State Evaluation***

***Western Iowa Tech Community College***

***October 8-9, 2013***

***FY 2014***



**COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

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State of Iowa  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Grimes State Office Building  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146

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**Accreditation Team  
Western Iowa Tech Community College  
Accreditation Evaluation  
FY 2014**

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**Western Iowa Tech Community College (WITCC)**  
**State Accreditation Evaluation**  
**October 8-9, 2013**  
**FY 2014**

**Purpose of the Evaluation**

The purpose of the review was a scheduled interim accreditation evaluation of Western Iowa Tech Community College (WITCC) by the Iowa Department of Education (DE) as mandated by Iowa Code, Section 260C.47.

**Assurance Summary State Standards**

**Compliance with Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Criteria**

The state accreditation team reviewed the most recent report and information from the HLC available at the time of the evaluation. WITCC's letter of accreditation by the HLC was reviewed and WITCC has continuing accreditation. No significant issues were identified in WITCC's most recent accreditation report. WITCC demonstrated they have met HLC criteria.

**Compliance with Additional State Standards**

**Faculty (Qualifications)**

All community college-employed instructors who are under contract as of July 1, 2011, who teach in career and technical education (CTE) or arts and sciences (including adjuncts) are required to meet minimum faculty standards (Iowa Code, Section 260C.48). A DE accreditation team member reviewed a random sample of faculty human resources files to ensure compliance with the standard.

**Finding:** No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

**Faculty Teaching Load**

The teaching loads of full-time instructors must not exceed the faculty load limits set forth in Iowa law. This is the case for CTE instructors, as well as for college parallel (arts and sciences) instructors (Iowa Code, Section 260C.48). A DE accreditation team member reviewed the instructional loads of a random sample of full-time faculty to ensure compliance with the standard.

**Finding:** No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

**Special Needs**

Community colleges are required to maintain equal access in recruitment, enrollment, and placement activities for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities must be given access to the full range of course offerings at a college through reasonable accommodations. Accreditation team members reviewed marketing/recruitment publications and information on the college's ADA (Americans' with Disabilities Act) policies and reports. Team members also conducted interviews with staff involved disabilities services.

**Finding:** The non-discrimination statement is missing in some college publications/flyers and on some syllabi reviewed.

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### **CTE Program Evaluations and Timelines**

There are a variety of state requirements related to the offering of CTE programs. The standards are included in Iowa Code, Chapter 258, 281—IAC 46.7(4), and 281—IAC 24.5(4). Standards for CTE programs include numerous requirements related to program and award length, program content, labor market demand, articulation, advisory committees, and more. All CTE programs (including both new programs and changes to existing programs) must be approved by the DE.

The DE maintains a database of approved programs for this purpose. Standards for CTE programs are included in the *Program Approval: Guidelines for Iowa Community Colleges* on the DE website. Additionally, community colleges are required to review at least 20 percent of the institution's CTE programs annually.

The DE reviews and approves institutional CTE program review processes through the state accreditation process. Standards for CTE program review are included in the guidelines for program approval on the DE website. The accreditation team members reviewed information on CTE program evaluations.

**Finding:** The college does not have a formal process in place to ensure that efforts are being made to have equal representation of males and females in advisory committees and to recruit members of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds reflective of the community. Iowa Code, Chapter 258.9 states "The state board shall adopt rules requiring that the memberships of local advisory councils fairly represent each sex and minorities residing in the school district." In the fall of 2014, the DE will follow-up with the college to ensure that this process is functioning as required.

### **Strategic Planning**

Community colleges are required to update their strategic plans at least every five years as a guide for the community and its decision-making (Iowa Code section 256.31(4) (a)). Team members reviewed the college's most recent strategic plan and interviewed selected staff.

**Finding:** No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

### **Physical Plant and Facilities**

Each community college must present evidence of adequate planning, including a board-approved facilities plan. The community college's facilities must meet state and federal requirements as outlined in the state accreditation guide. The team reviewed the facilities plan and met with the facility director to discuss the college's planning process and decision-making structure.

**Finding:** No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

### **Quality Faculty Plans (QFP)**

Iowa law establishes the process for community colleges to plan for the hiring and professional development of faculty. Institutional QFPs are required to meet the standards of 281—IAC 24.5(5). The accreditation team reviewed the plan and verified that it met state requirements.

**Finding:** No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

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**Senior Year Plus Programs (SYP)**

There are a variety of requirements for SYP programs offered to high school students jointly enrolled in community college. These requirements are included in Iowa Code, Chapter 261E. Currently, the DE utilizes the National Alliance for Concurrent Enrollment Partnership's (NACEP) accreditation process to ensure compliance with many statutory requirements (legislated SYP Postsecondary Course Audit Committee). The accreditation team reviewed the college's accreditation status with NACEP, interviewed selected staff, and reviewed additional documentation.

**Finding:** No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

**Compliance with Non-Accreditation State or Federal Requirements**

**Finding:** No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

**Evaluation Team Recommendations**

The state accreditation team recommends continued accreditation for Western Iowa Tech Community College (WITCC). A state comprehensive accreditation evaluation is scheduled for the 2018 fiscal year.